He points to the achievements of the past twelve months with pardonable pride. While The Thibune has retained all the excellent features that made it such a favorite in former days, it has jexhibited an enterprise and acuteness in its news department which have been the wonder of all its old friends. Remembering that the chief function of a daily journal is to give its readers the fullest, the best arranged, the most attractive, and the most readable history of the occur rences of the time, it has devoted its bost energies to this business, and its success has been uni-versally recognized and applicated. The year has been itful of startling events, and every incident has found in THE TRIBUNE its promptest, most accurate, and most perfectly equipped historian. A TRIBUNE correspondent was the only civilian who witnessed the surrender of the Virginius, and his picturesque description of that transaction, transmitted by telegraph, is the only account the public has yet seen of an incident upon which depended for many weeks the question of peace or war. THE TRIBUNE published the only full and exhaustive account by Atlantic telegraph of the terrible Ville du Havre disaster, giving all the incidents of that catastrophe ten days before other journals received them by the slow course of the mails. It distanced all competitors in its tarilling story by of the adventures of the Polaris castaways. It anticipated every other paper in the country and even the Government itself, by its graphic narra tives of Custer's battles on the Yellowstone. The clab orate and deeply interesting letters of its special correspondent in the West gave the only complete account paper. The reports of THE TRIBUNE presented the important proceedings of the Evangelical Alliance in this sect of enthusiastic praise. During the pame its daily instory of Wall Street made it absolutely indispensable to business men; and its special correspondents after-ward described the condition of affairs in the manufacturing districts with an ability which no other paper

These are mere instances of the uniform success in the most important branch of journalism which has steadily attended THE TRIBUNE throughout the year, and may therefore be fairly taken as an earnest of what THE TRIBUNE is likely to do hereafter. Its purpose in 1874 is to surpass its previous record, constantly increasing the fleiency of its organization, adding to its resources, and keeping up its ancient celebrity as an organ of cultivated and thoughtful men, and a high authority in literature, science, and the arts. It will continue to de vote especial attention to the proceedings of learned bodies, to education, to scientific discoveries and explorations, to new inventions, to agriculture, to the promotion of American industry, and to books, epictures, music, and the drama. Its financial articles have won a peculiarly high reputation, and will still be a prominent feature in its columns. Its reports of the markets have long been distinguished for fullness and accuracy, and its quotations have been accepted as standards in the cattle, produce, and provision trades for many years. Its reports of local affairs are acknowledged to be the most accurate, intelligent and complete; its domestic abroad it is served by the ablest writers and keenest observers engaged upon any American periodical.

While it never can be a neutral in politics, THE THEBESE is entirely independent of all parties and all partisans. It believes that the mere organ of a clique cannot be a theroughly good newspaper, and cannot trusted for impartial and just comment upon current events. It maintains with the old fervor and will always defend the Republican principles of equality and justice with which, under the control of its illustrious identified. But it values parties solely as means for pro-curing honest government on sound principles. For the partisans who deplore exposures of corruption or imbecility in high places as likely to hurt the party and hander their success in holding on to the offices-who insist that a journal of their faith must follow their lead, execute their plans, and defend their acts, it has no feeling save contempt. Standing by its old landmarks, it defends the constitutional guarantees to the liberty of the citizen and the sacredness of the nation's faith with its creditors, sists on the duty of Protection to American Industry. champions all proper measures for developing the m termi resources of the country, urges wise means for restricting the evils of Intemperance, seeks sedulously to foster the commanding interests of Manufactures and Agriculture. But it holds itself aloof from entangling alliances, waits on no Caucus or Convention for its opinions, as it arises, on its own merits, and maintains the liberty of caudid and impartial criticism. During the present session of Congress its telegraphic reports from Wash ington, where it maintains the strongest force of experionced correspondents ever assembled ther the interests of a single journal, will the found incomparably more valuable than those of any of its more interesting cotemporaries. And finally, in the editorial discussion of public affairs, THE TRIBUNE endeavors to combine the atmost frankness of expression and independence of thought with a strict impartiality of judgment and that dignity and refinement of language which bent a family newspaper. It wastes no space in wrangling with other papers, pays to personal abuse, and reserves its columns for its readers' interests, not its editor's grievances.

That there is a popular appreciation of that sort of tudependent, vigorous, enterprising, and high-toned journalism of which THE TRIBUNE is now the chief rep resentative in this or any other country, is sufficiently proved by the results of the past twelve months. The close of 1873 finds this paper more prosperous than it has been at any previous period of its history, and the new year opens for it with the most brilliant prospects. In a short time its mechanical facilities will surpass those of any other journal in the world; and on the completion of its new and magnificent building it will be enabled to introduce various improvements of the most amportant character.

THE SEMI-WEEKLY TRIBUNE.

THE SEMI-WEEKLY TRIBUNE.

THE SEMI-WEEKLY TRIBUNE has grown very rapidly in public favor of late. In addition to a careful summary of the news it contains all the best of the foreign and domestic correspondence and leading articles of the Daily :—it gives specially the scientific intelligence (including the proceedings of all American scientific societies), with the best of the book reviews, and the miscellaneous matter relating to education, the arts, religion, &c. It has all the commercial news and market reports; all the agricultural articles of the Weekly; and gives, moreover, regularly a serial work of fiction, presenting in the course of the year three or four of the latest productions of the most popular novelists. As it takes only a few select advertisements, it is enabled to give an unusually large propertion of reading matter, and may be called, considering the extent and variety of its contents, the cheapest newspaper in the world. It is published every Tucaday and Friday, and reaches nearly every postofice east of the Misslasippi within one or two days of its issue.

THE WEEKLY TRIBUNE.

THE WEEKLY TRIBUNE has been for the space of a generation the Farmer's favorite paper. Besides a complete condensation of the news of the week, a selection of Uterary and miscellaneous reading, and a full page of the best editorials from the Daily, it contains in every number a greater amount of agricultural matter than is furnished by any distinctively agricultural matter than is prepared expressly for its columns by the best agricultural writers and practical farmers in the United States; and as its contributors are in every part of the country it will be found equally valuable in New-England, in the South, on the Pacific slope, or in the Mississippi Yalley. Great attention is paid to all subjects connected with the Farm, the Garden, and the Household, and some of the original articles every week are illustrated with wood-cuts. The market quotations of farm produce, cattle, provisions, breadstuffs, dry goods, and all kinds of merchandise, are exceedingly full and scrupulously accurate. The utmost care is bestowed upon the typographical arrangement of the paper, and the print is always clear and legible and scarrally larger than that of any other New-York paper. THE WEEKLY TRIBUNE.

A new feature has been added to American journalism by the valuable TRIBUNE EXTRAS.

A new feature has been added to American journalism by the valuable TRIBUNE Extra sheets, which have attamed such an extraordinary popularity during the past year. They present the fresh fruit of the best intellects of this and other countries, the most remarkable icctures, the most valuable scientific and geographical researches, at a merely mominal price. In the scries of 14 Extrastream from the common of the daily TRIBUNE, some of the latest fectures of Agassix, Tyndall, and Beecher; the explorations of Prof. Hayden, the full history and description of the Farmers' Movement, the best lessons of the great Vicona Exposition, and the complete report of the proceedings of the Evangelical Aliance. Had a mailton of the Extras have already been sold and the demand tor them is steadily increasing.

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We cannot consent to accept a publication months after the issue of this prospectus. Its value to us consists in its appearance about the beginning of the new THE TRIBUNE ASSOCIATION.

### Amnsements and Meetings.

ACADEMY OF MUSIC. - Italian Opera: "Les Huguenots." BAIN HALL.-The Pilgrim. BARNUM'S GREAT SHOW.—"The Heroes of '76." The Rink. Day and night. BOOTH'S THEATER.—"Kit." F. S. Chanfrau.

BROADWAY THEATER.—"The Woman in White."
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TONY PASTOR'S OPERA HOUSE.-Varieties. UNION SQUARE THEATER.—"Led Astray."
WALLACK'S THEATER.—"A Man of Honor." Lester Wal-

#### Index to Advertisements.

AMUSEMENTS—Eleventh Page—5th and 6th columns.
BANKING AND FINANCIAL—Fifth Page—6th column.
BANKING-HOUSES AND BANKERS—Ninth Page—4th BOARD AND ROOMS-Eleventh Page-3d and 4th columns

BOARD AND KOOMS—Eleventh Page—3d and 4th columns.
BISINESS NOTICES—Exith Page—1st column.
CHANCES FOR BUSINESS MEN—Ninth Page—6th column.
CORPORATION NOTICES—Frenth Page—6th column.
DANCING ACADEMIES—Kighth Page—6th column.
DENTSTRY—Eleventh Page—2d column.
DEVIDENS NOTICES—Ninth Page—5th column.
DEV GOODS—Eleventh Page—1st and 2d columns.
ELECTION RETURNS—Ninth Page—1st and 2d columns.
ELECTION RETURNS—Ninth Page—6th columns.
EUROPEAN ADVERTISEMENTS—Eleventh Page—1st and 2d columns.

21 columns.
FIXANCIAL—Ninth Page—4th column.
FIXANCIAL—Ninth Page—4th column.
FOR THE HOLIDAYS—Eleventh Page—1st column.
FURNITURE—Eleventh Page—2d column.
HELP WANTED, MARS—Eleventh Page—5th column.
HORSES, CARRIAGES, HARNESS, &c.—Tenth Page—6th

umb.

Hotels—Fifth Page—3d column.

Hotels—Fifth Page—3d column.

Houses and Fairlis Wanted—Fifth Page—3d column.

Ice Cream—Elecenth Page—1st column.

Instruction—Fighth Page—5th and 6th columns.

Lectures and Mertings—Elecenth Page—6th column.

Lost and Found—Fifth Page—3d column.

Marble and Slate Mantels—Ninth Page—5th column. MISCELLANEOUS-Ninth Page-5th column: Mescallaneous-Ninth Page-5th column: Treifin P

MISCELANEOUS-Ninth Page-5th column: Twelfth Page-2d, 3d, 4th, 5th, and 6th columns.

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS-Eighth Page-6th column.

NEW PUBLICATIONS-Eighth Page-2d, 3d, 4th, and 5th

columns.
PROPOSALS—Tenth Page—6th column.
PRAL ESTATE FOR SALE, CITY—Fifth Page—3d column;
BROOKLYN—Fifth Page—3d column; New-JERSEY—
Fifth Page—3d column; COLNTRY—Fifth Page—3d column; TO EXCHANGE—Fifth Page—3d column.
SALISS BY AUGUON—Ninth Page—5th column.
SAVINGS HAKKS—Ninth Page—5th column.
SITEATIONS WANTED, MALES—Eleventh Page—4th and 5th column. FEMALES—Eleventh Page—5th column. columns; FEMALES-Eleventh Page-4th a PECIAL NOTICES-Sepenth Page-5th column

SPECIAL NOTICES—Seventh Page—6th column.
STATIONERY—Night Page—5th column.
STEAMBOATS AND RAILROADS—Eleventh Page—2d and 3d STEAMERS, OCEAN-Fifth Page-2d and 3d columns. TO LET. BROOKLYN PROPERTY—Fifth Page—3d column; CITY PROPERTY—Fifth Page—3d column.

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idding. The Tribune Office may be found in the first sidding in the rear on Spruce-st. The Tribune Counting oom is on the first floor, and is entered at the second door own Spruce-st. from the old site.

# New-Dork Daily Tribune.

FOUNDED BY HORACE GREELEY

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24, 1873.

## TRIPLE SHEET.

Havana journals, commenting on the opinion of Attor ney-General Williams, say that Spain must demand sat sfaction from the - United States. - Diplometic troubles are likely to arise between France and Ger many on account of the pastorals of French bishops Cordial relations are proposed between France and Italy by Chevalier Nigra. —— The Bowles bank ruptcy case in London has been adjourned sine die.

Secretary Belknap intends reducing, as much as possi je, the estimates of expenditures of the War Department. === The expenses of the Executive Office hav been doubled during the present administration. The President will not withdraw Judge Williams's nom ination to be Chief-Justice. ==== Secretary Robeson will resume the Polaris investigation to-day. - Mrs. Alexander Agassiz, daughter-in-law of the late Prof. Agassiz, died Monday night. \_\_\_\_ Judge Hagar has been elected Senator from California for the short term A State Grange is being organized in New-Hamp shire.

Deputy Controller Storrs, County Auditor Earle, Keyser, Davidson, and Garvey testified for the prosecu tion in the trial of ex-Mayor Hall. - The deputy sheriffs tracked Genet to Pelham Bay and Whitestone but did not arrest him. —— Eleven masked robbers entered the house of the late Judge Emmet, at Pelham, handenfied the male occu pants, and tried to blow open the safe. The Chamber of Commerce consulted with a committee from Pennsylvania in reference to the Centen mal Exposition. --- A Brooklyn Coroner attempted to explain the irregularities in his office. === The police searched in vain for the murderer of the prother and sister in Broome-st. == Gold, 110j, 110, 110j. Thermometer. 30°, 32°, 30°.

Telegraphic announcements show that the climate of Cape Coast Castle has proved fatal to many of the British forces sent to fight against the Ashantees. The letter which we publish to-day on our third page from a correspondent at that place, shows in a strong light the savage and warlike character of the enemy, which has allied itself with the malaria of the country for the work of de-

It is possible that something like a compromise has been effected in closing up the Senatorial contest in California. Judge Hagar, an old-line Democrat, has been chosen to fill the unexpired term of Senator Casserly, which The copies and one the copies tyr. 22 00 known outside of his State as a skillful, cooloxtra, 1 year...... 25 00 Thirty copies, 1 year 20 00 known outside of his State as a skillful, coolconfirmed wrongthrough the South writing a series of papers directors find, in one way and another, percided, in the cases of confirmed wrongconfirmed wrongthrough the South writing a series of papers directors find, in one way and another, percided, in the cases of confirmed wrongconfirmed wrongthrough the South writing a series of papers directors find, in one way and another, percided, in the cases of confirmed wrongconfirmed wrongthrough the South writing a series of papers directors find, in one way and another, percided, in the cases of confirmed wrongconfirmed wrongthrough the South writing a series of papers directors find, in one way and another, percided, in the cases of confirmed wrongconfirmed wrongthrough the South writing a series of papers directors find, in one way and another, percided, in the cases of confirmed wrongconfirmed wrongconf

several terms in both branches of the California Legislature, and has been approved an honest legislator, somewhat crotchety in his views, and bitterly opposed to all rings and monopolies.

Right feeling was manifested at the meeting of the Chamber of Commerce, yesterday, when the question of contributing to the American Centennial Exhibition was considered. The discussion was frank, and it developed a spirit of cordial generosity toward the Exhibition scheme on the part of New-York merchants. It is encouraging, too, that reports from abroad, to which reference is elsewhere made, indicate a very general intention in Europe to participate in the Centennial Exposition.

We print this morning another letter from Mr. R. A. Witthaus, jr., who furnishes the sharpest and most intelligible observations we have yet seen in regard to the disaster of the Ville du Havre. He condemns in an unqualified manner the lack of discipline on board the French vessel, and has no hesitation in fixing the direct responsibility for her loss upon the officer on duty at the moment of the collision. Mr. Witthaus mentions one incident of the wreck which is certainly not creditable. The only persons who left the Ville du Havre before she sank were of the officers and crew. Not a single passenger was saved except those picked up in the water.

The panic in the National Treasury is having pretty much the same effect that it had in the country. This is a searching time. Several Congressmen who certainly cannot be accused of partisan hostility to the powers that be, have been scanning the national expense list, which they find full of surprises. The Presidential office, for instance, has doubled its incidental expenses within a year or two. Over \$100,000 can be saved in the consular and diplomatic service, and a like sum may be frugally picked up in War Department retrenchment. It must not be supposed that this sudden vigilance is altogether unselfish. Congressmen who do not like to see labor stopped on public works in their districts are sure to find out that money may be saved somewhere

The New-Jersey Constitutional Commission concluded its labors at Trenton yesterday, and a complete summary of its work is given on the second page of THE TRIBUNE. The Commission had no power in itself, and was only called together to suggest amendments for the consideration of the Legislature. Its work seems to have been admirably done and should command the thoughtful attention of the Legislature. Not the least important of the changes recommended are several providing for the abolition of special legislation by the substitution of general laws. The passage of the General Railroad law last year removed the most prolific source of that species of legislation; and the changes proposed are simply a further application of the same principles. The amendments, to become fundamental law, must be passed by a majority vote of two successive Legislatures and be ratified by a majority vote of the people.

There is an alarming increase in bold burglarics throughout! the country. In this vicinity there have been several which are more like the lawless crimes of Mexico than anything else. The latest is the forcible entry of a house near New-Rochelle by a party of masked men who overpowered the inmates and stripped them of their valuables during a tarry of several hours. It is not long since a similar robbery, though on a smaller scale, was committed in one of the most crowded and busy sections of this city. And, shortly before that, a family on the banks of the Hudson, near New-York, were pounced upon and pinioned, while at their tea table, by a gang of bandits who robbed the house. These and other such deeds of violence are highly discreditable to the civilization of which we boast so much. If they had been reported as occurring in Greece, for example, we should be very likely to think of them as peculiar to a lax administration of law and an impotent Govern-

A letter which we publish in another column from Mr. Proctor, is called out by the pleasant disclaimer of Miss Maria Mitchell that her discovery of a comet had received harsh treatment at the hands of Sir G. Airy, the Astronomer Royal. Perhaps some memory of his former successful conflicts with Prof. Airy stirs Mr. Proctor to prod his old antagonist with a fresh lance, and he is not a little sarcastic. He takes the opportunity, however, to point out a failing on the part of American scientists, that deserves attention. He tells them what has frequently been suggested in these columns, that the prompt publication of their discoveries is a duty that they owe not less to themselves than to the world at large. To bury a discovery in the proceedings of some learned society, to be published only after a long interval, reaching at best but a few hundred readers, is a traditional method of the olden time strangely unfitted for the present. An announcement of discovery sent to THE TRIBUNE would be brought before the eyes of hundreds of thousands of readers the next morning, and while adding to knowledge would stimulate in innumerable ways the pursuit of scientific inquiry,

THE SOUTH AND ITS NEEDS.

We have heard a good deal lately about hard times in the manufacturing districts, and distress among the unemployed workmen of New-York and other large cities; but how many of us know anything of the terrible destitution that now prevails in Southern agricultural districts, where bank failures and papies in the stock market are unknown, and the planter who retains the ownership of an estate is supposed at any rate to be in no danger of starving? Yet in these fertile regions there is perhaps more terrible suffering than in any other part of the United States. "Give me the scraps from your table," writes an educated citizen of Montgomery; "I am starving." It is no exaggeration. The people of certain portions of Alabama are actually in want of food. They are in danger of losing the homes in which they can no longer support life; and already they are moving out of the State to seek their fortunes elsewhere. We do not read that the political situation is any more vexatious there than it has been for some years past. The people are willing to work; they do work; but the end of a long season of labor in the cotton fields finds them without a mouthful of food and without a

Mr. Edward King, who has been traveling

penny.

this distressing condition of things in a letter to THE TRIBUNE which we print this morning. The planters have unfortunately trusted too much to cotton. Embarrassed by various financial difficulties, they mortgaged their crops in advance to buy food for their negroes. It has been a bad year. The caterpillar has stripped the fields. The yield of cotton in some sections is not half the average; it is not enough to pay the advances on the crop, and leaves nothing for the Winter. All the corn, and flour, and bacon, all the clothing and other manufactured goods for these exclusively cottongrowing districts, must be [brought from abroad. There is no money to pay for them, so the planter and his laborers go cold and hungry. Till industry in the South is organized upon a more provident system, a crisis like this will be a frequent occurrence and a constant menace.

There are two remedies. One is in hands of the Southern people themselves, and consists in raising with their cotton at least a moderate supply of food for home consumption. It is madness to live year after year at the mercy of money-lenders and caterpillars. The other is in our hands, and we should lose no time in applying it. If the South could manufacture its own cotton it would have work and wages for the idle. To do this it needs capital. Mills have been established in some places and are doing well; there are thirteen cotton mills in Alabama, and nothing but the want of capprevents their erection at all the centers of cotton production which are now suffering most severely for the lack of food. In manufacturing enterprise however the South is unable to make a single step without help from us. Destitute and burdened with debt, it looks to the North for aid. Any man who will build a cotton mill in these destitute districts will do a more beneficent deed than the founding of a hospital or the opening of a soup kitchen. And it is a charity which will pay-not the priceless rewards which are reserved for the next life, but the sordid dividends which tollow a good business speculation in this.

PICKINGS AND STEALINGS.

Very likely if the people of this country knew precisely how much money is expended by Government officials at Government charge upon their own personal and family expenses the amount would surprise them. The inquiry into the expenditures of the Attorney-General's office has already brought to light some very ugly items of this sort, and it is understood that the same system runs through all the Departments. Among plain-spoken officials who have become callons to its unwholesome influence it is known as a system of "pickings and stealings;" among men of softer temper and lighter tread it goes by the milder designation of "perquisites." It is not peculiar to men in public life or confined to the national capital. It infects all classes, is infinite in form and variety; so ramified and so general that it may well be called a national vice. It is, moreover, the parent of numberless other vices that follow in its train, the source and cause of an endless amount of dis-

honesty and official corruption. Whoever has examined with any care the bills for the contingent expenses of Congress does not need to be told that Senators and Representatives and all the officers and clerks connected with Congress are furnished with great numbers of articles of use and ornament at the public expense, to which they have no right whatever under any strictly honest system of conducting business. Besides what appears in these published reports-which by the way have only a limited circulation and are not by any means included among the abuses of the franking privilege-there other large amounts of pickings and stealings concealed in one form and another office. In all the Departments, and from the highest to the lowest in each, the same bad

practice is in vogue, and the same methods are resorted to to get out of the Government, by hook or by crook, something more than the wages which the law allows. The manly letter of Mr. Willard of Vermont, published a few weeks ago, disclosed some of the workings of the system in the President's household, though it cost the writer the confidence of his party and his position in the committees of the House. What is true of the President's household expenditures is equally true in differing degrees of all the Departments. Careful auditing of the bills and estimates by the committees which are appointed to the duty but habitually shirk it would show that it is not alone in the items of horses and carriages for private use that the people are taxed to pay the family expenses of high officials, but that many other of the usual and ordinary private and personal bills of these officers are paid in the same crooked and dishonest manner.

In and about State Legislatures the same corrupt practices obtain, and we are safe in the assertion that there is not a State in the Union whose treasury has not been depleted, and, what is worse, its officials corrupted and its moral standards debased by them. Municipal treasuries have suffered in the same way. and municipal rings by the same means been intrenched in power and gorged with plunder. Let the system but get a foothold anywhere, in city, State, or nation, its progress is rapid and sure. Nothing but a change in the organic act seems possible to hinder its growth or reacue the treasury upon which it has once fixed its pickers and steal ers. It may begin in fees; it grows soon to perquisites, and then, as its promoters are emboldened by impunity and power, it takes its own name, of pickings and stealings. Familiarity with the name begets familiarity with the fact and deadens the conscience to the offense itself. The distinction between meum and tuum having once been dimmed by the addition of a questionable perquisite to the legal wages of his office, there is beyond this no line of demarkation for the peculator between honesty and theft except that shadowy one the fear of detection and of consequences. So grow up defaulters in Government offices stamp thieves and Treasury robbers in the State, and plundering rings in the large cities, who stick at nothing from sweating appropriations to forging signatures. The whole system of picking and stealing-

call it, by what name you will, fees, perquisites, or "taking the chances"-being, as we think must be admitted, bad in itself, and the parent of a great brood of vices, is there any cure for it, or any escape from it? Indeed, to come down from the representatives and servants of the people, and to bring the question home to the people themselves-who shall cast the first stone at Executive Departments, Congress, Legislature, or Municipal Council? Can the great corporations whose

stockholders do not share? Can the banks whose officers speculate with funds not their own? Can journalists whose opinions are dead-headed? Can mechanics who carry home at night odds and ends for fuel that belong to their employer, or conductors who "knock "down" fares, or hotel waiters who are paid by guests as well as landlords, or in fact any of the trades or professions which directly or indirectly are looking out for "chances," and counting on some form of picking and stealing? It is not the politician or the officeholder alone who is beset by this temptation, and carried away by the strong desire of getting the dollar he does not earn. The disease is universal. We can hardly hope to eradicate it at once or entirely. But we can at least refuse it official sanction. Cougress can if it has the disposition mitigate it very considerably. It can cut off a great multitude of dishonest and unlawful perquisites in all the Departments and in Congress Itself. It can establish a higher standard of official integrity by scrutinizing carefully its own expenditures and those of the Departments, and abolishing everywhere the system which in so many petty and contemptible ways burdens the taxpayer and destroys the manly self-respect and honorable uprightness of the men who profit by it. When Congress says, "At least we will not be mean and sharp ourselves," we shall see the beginning of a reform in the matter of pickings and stealings.

CHRISTMAS KLEPTOMANIA This is the season of small larcenies. A

great many women are running and riding

about with well-filled purses, and a great many

other women are running after them intent upon abstraction and conversion. On the pavement, in the cars and stages, and in the shops, the felonious industry goes on, with much shrill wailing from the plundered as well as the plunderers, with occasional detections and arrests, and with no little real and inconvenient loss. The shopkeepers, if you ask them, will tell you a doleful story of a great deal of property carried off in spite of numerous and unremitting precautions, not the least of the trouble being that innocent and honorable ladies are now and then accused of filehing, and stupidly and cruelly arrested, only to be summarily discharged and restored to their distracted homes. The shopmen will further tell you as the result of their sad experience, that not all the larcenies, by any means, are perpetrated by experts; that women of respectable social position and under no pressing temptation of want will carry off goods and chattels for which they have neither bargained nor paid, which they do not need, and which they might with ease and honesty acquire if they did need them. Moll Flanders is sometimes found, not in the stews and slums, the mistress of a thief or burglar, but in an Avenue numerically respectable, with a lawful husband to whom his good name is infinitely precious, and with half a dozen children-perhaps with a doting father whose irascibility becomes white hot, when told that his darling, like the Artful Dodger's twinbrother, has "unlawfully taken to prigging." Perhaps it is a great consolation to husband or father, however little to the exasperated shopkeeper, to be told that a fine Greek name has been invented for this kind of appropriation; that it is now mentioned in the medical books as Kleptomania, all sorts of sins being now 'Manias; that it is just as much a disease as dyspepsia, with which, indeed, it is not seldom complicated; that Madame or Miss steals because she cannot help it; and that the Doctor, not the Policeman, is the proper person to be called in. Matters are often adjusted upon the basis of this psychological theory. Husband or papa pays for the stolen finery. The shopkeeper prudently holds his tongue and keeps or acquires a good customer; and which go to swell the illegitimate proceeds of the policeman goes away winking with spasmodic facetiousness and preternatural intelligence. Sometimes the affair gets into the newspapers, and sometimes it does not; but if it should, what matter? Kleptomania is a very impressive word. The real, perfectly sane Moll Flanders goes down to the Island, greatly to the grief because greatly to the pecuniary loss of her "man;" the amateur Moll, being a kleptomaniae, returns to the bosom of society, which is very ample and full of the milk of judicious forgiveness. So much for a word derived from the Greeks! So much for softhearted etymology and considerate psychological science! Perhaps the disease above alluded to becomes

more unmanageable as it becomes chronic, but it is wonderful to notice how virulently it sometimes attacks little girls, either in the nursery or only lately out of it. What buds in the jam closet frequently blooms in the jeweler's shop. We have before us an account of a case in point. In Chelsea, Mass., kleptomania has broken out epidemically in a girls' school Several misses, it is discovered, have become not Jack Shepherds, for that metamorphosis their sex forbade; but shall we say Gill Shepherds? Four of them have been arrested, charged with foraging among the haberdashers and small ware dealers of lively Chelsea, and with carrying away jewelry not for their own adornment, toys not for their hours of recreation, Cologne water not for perfuming their own persons. Here is where the kleptomania comes in. It agitates us to write it, but all this stealing was done for the benefit of the Young Men's Christian Association of Chelsea. That respectable body was about to hold a Fair. The young ladies were to have tables. They naturally wanted these tables to appear as beautiful as possible. Perhaps they were the victims of conscientious casuistry. Perhaps they thought that stealing for the Young Men's Christian Association was no thievery-the bewildered little devotees! At any rate they carried away the property, and, being detected in this labor of love, are now sustaining peculiar relations to the Police Court, greatly to the grief of the "respectable 'parents." We suppose that the Rhadamanthus of Chelsea is not a believer in kleptomaniacal theories, for he required bail just as if the doctors had never described the disease. We know that it is hard to draw the line

and to fix the point at which moral responsibility ceases. We believe that there are a few persons who cannot help stealing, but even these, in a majority of instances, might have arrested the aberration at a time when self-control was possible. It is with stealing so with hard drinking. The oinomaniac had ample opportunity of avoiding his fate through a little wholesome self-discipline, and he has become irresponsible simply because he was untrue to himself at a time when he was perfectly responsible. We admit that when the question of penalties is to be deingly embarrassing. But society has a pert of and indisputable right of self-protection. cannot help locking up those who cannot help stealing. A general knowledge of this simple truth would, we think, be of great assistance to those who experience an irresistible impulse to steal; but should it prove otherwise, our decision must be the same. The kleptomaniaes, for their own sake, should be kept under lock and key.

MR. PROCTOR'S LECTURES.

The lectures "On the Recent Aspects of Astronomical Science" lately delivered by Mr. Proctor in Boston, and soon to be given in New-York and Brooklyn, have a special interest to the lecturegoing community as the first systematic presents tion in this country of the novel and impressive views which have almost made astronomy a new science in our own generation. It is true, as we are often assured, that this is the oldest and most perfeet of the sciences. It began in primeval times by the observation of shepherds, who first grouped stars into fantastic resemblances to animal forms; and it has been developed in modern times into a grand system of demonstrated truth so accurate and so sure that the future is known even as the past, and both prophecy and history are reduced to mathematics. And yet ancient as is the origin of astronomy, and exact as are the previsions to which it has attained, so far from being a completed science, it has but just reached one of the great crises of its unfolding, and the contributions of the present age to its progress will well compare in prilitancy and startling significance with those of any former time.

It was supposed, not many years since, that when the sun and planets bad been measured and weighed, their distances ascertained, their motions determined, and the starry heavens surveyed and charted, that the work of the astronomers wa mainly accomplished, and that beyond the correction of previous measurements, little further remained to be ascertained about the universe. And vet, in the presence of the astronomy of our day, that of a generation or two ago looks crude and elementary. Historic astronomy, though ever interesting from the sublimity of its phenomena, was still narrow in the range of its ideas. For thousands of years it was a matter of the simplest observation, the Copernican revolution having been completed before the invention of the telescope. Great intellectual grasp and originality were undoubtedly required to educe the true theory of the solar system, but the elements of the problem were few and well defined. Astronomy widened in the epoch of Newton under the influence of new mechanical conceptions, but it still remained a remote and separate division of knowledge, and while a noble conquest of the human mind, still a conquest that it was possible to make in the earlier apprenticeship of man to the research of nature.

But by far the greatest step in astronomic advance

yet taken has been made in our own day, by bring-

ing it into closer and completer relation with the

full circle of the terrestrial sciences. If, in the

time of Newton, astronomy received a vast impulse

by being brought under the laws of mechanical

motion, it has been much more profoundly affected

in our own time by being brought into relation with

the laws of molecular action. Astronomical ques-

tions have been enlarged and deepened, we

might almost say vitalized, by this alliance. We look now upon the boasted knowledge of the past as bare and sterile when contrasted with results so astonishing as to make the wildest speculations of former years appear seber and commonplace beside them. The discovery of spectrum analysis opens a new chapter in the book of astronomy. Chemistry, which was formerly "of the earth, earthy," has at length become a celestial science, and we now inquire into the [nature and consititution of suns, stars, comets and nebulæ with the same assurance of certainty that we do into the solid matter beneath our feet. If we cannot visit the distant bodies of space, we have learned how to question the messenger that comes from them. By the wonderful researches into the chemistry of light, in which our countryman, Dr. J. W. Draper. who first photographed the human face, was an eminent pioneer, and which gave rise to a new instrument of discovery in the hands of Kirchoff . 'ae radiations of matter give report of the nat their sources, regardless of distance, and the contrivance which discloses the changes in a furnace reveals also the secrets of the sun. T! even a higher stroke in the unification of nat than the law of gravitation itself, which involves but a single relation of power among the bodies of nature were formed of one solitary element. But the spectroscope opens to us the analysis of matter and the diversities of its constitution, and thus brings the whole scheme of terrestrial phenomena into coordination with celestial agencies. We have been visited by eminent foreign astrono mers within the memory of the present generationthe learned Lardner and the elequent Nichol, and more recently still we have listened with rapt attention to the discourses of our own lamented Mitchell; but all these spoke of an astronomy that is past, and had they lived they would be among its antiquated teachers. The truths they taught were grand, but they grow pale before the grander revelstions that have now burst upon us, and which those gifted minds, though so recent, would have regarded as impossible forever. These new and remarkable developments of the science so foreign to all that was previously known, and complicating its high questions with the whole course of terrestrial changes have demanded and brought forth a new generation of its interpreters. Foremost among these is the gentleman whose lectures we shall soon have an opportunity of hearing. Mr. Proctor is but a young man, who belongs entirely to the new epoch, his mind being pervaded by the modern conceptions of the subject. In his various works, which hold a high rank in the literature of the science, he treats with great clearness and fullness of the most advanced astronomical questions. He is the author of the best work in our language upon "The Sun," and of the only complete treatise we have upon "The Moon." In "Other Worlds than Ours," in "The Orbs Around Us," in his numerous papers contributed to the periodicals, and in his new and charming volume entitled "The Expanse of Heaven," the latest views on astronomical ques tions are presented in a manner most attractive and

instructive to general readers. In his role as a popular lecturer, Mr. Proctor proves to be quite as strong as in that of a popular writer. His course of twelve lectures before the Lowell In stitute was listened to by crowded Boston audience with increasing interest to the end. A ready and fluent speaker, full of enthusiasm over his great themes, and with a remarkable skill in making his listeners understand what he is saying, he answers to that best test of a popular speaker-where the hearers suppose that the lecture has been but half an hour long, although in fact they have been listening for an hour and a haif. Mr. Proctor's courses in New-York before the Young Men's Christian Association, commencing Jan. 8, and in Brook lyn, before the Mercantile Library Association, will consist of six lectures on "The Sun," "The Moon," 'The Planets," "The Comets," "The Stars," and "The Evolution of the Planetary System." He has prepared at great expense an extensive series of liagrams, illustrating the later facts and views of the general subject, and he may be expected to furnish our citizens with a course of intellectual entertainments of the highest order.

To quote the miller in the novel, "It's an uncom mon fine thing when you can let a man know what you think of him without paying for it." Mr. John Drover of Maine is an unfortunate gentleman wh has found himself unable to do this pleasant thing. An ardent devotion to the dictionary led him came ally to observe of one of his neighbors that the said neighbor was an "indefatigable genius." To the ordinary mind this does not seem a remark of a dark and mildly slanderous nature. But the minds of Maine are not ordinary, and the neighbor instantly began suit for slander, the result of which was that